

THE DAILY SHORT STORY

A Struggle of Nations.

The boat came in atop a hissing, boiling breaker, balanced a moment, then dropped upon the sticky sand as its watery support crept back to Mother Ocean. The next wave caught the occupants crawling awkwardly up the sloping beach and lent a buffeting impetus. After that they sprawled full length high up beyond the reach of the long, foaming swells, and rested.

It was Walters, the Englishman, who first arose. He looked about and saw green fringes of banana-palms, luxuriant, high-colored, blade-leaved tropical growths, a ridge of distant blue hills and a stream of trickling water. It was a pleasant sight.

"It will make another crackling good red spot on the map to keep the sun from setting on the flag of St. George," he declared. "I think I'll name it Waltersland."

The words aroused the others, four men and a young woman. Painfully they scrambled to their feet and took in the vista which had so impressed the Englishman. Then Ivan Trebiloff, who had been a mate on the sunken liner, faced Walters.

"I say this will make a nice, tight little isle for the Great White Father. Nicholas island is its name."

The German, Hans Althoff, turned and glared. "It is a good spot for the kaiser's colonists," he growled, "and it would make a splendid naval station. I will

fight any of you for it. I call it Wilhelmiland."

Trebiloff nodded his head in assent. The Englishman continued to smile contemptuously. "There'll be a Dreadnought down here when I get back to civilization," he hinted.

Then the two dark little men aroused and chattered their claims. "It is for Portugal, the glorious land of all navigators," declared Juan Fernandez.

"No—no—no," sputtered the other; "it is for sunny Italy. It is Humbertoland."

"Will you fight for it?" growled Hans Althoff.

The Portuguese slunk back. "No—no. It is you and the Russian and the Britisher who fight. I, a true Portuguese, will draw cards with the Italian. Then we cast lots."

The German and the Russian nodded assent and prepared for combat. Each removed his superfluous clothing and took up position on the shelving sand. The Englishman stood near and kept up his disdainful smile. "I will referee the sport," he said, "but H. H. S. Redoubtable will settle the ownership of the isle."

The combatants growled sullen defiance and pitched in. On the grass higher up the Portuguese had produced a deck of water-soaked playing cards. The Italian assisted him in shuffling and they prepared to draw. The young woman, who was very comely, slipped over to the supercilious Englishman. Trebiloff and the German were hammering